



Causing a stir at Cairo : C. W. A. Scott and—looking extremely wide awake—Flt. Lt. Tommy Rose.

and Llewellyn arrived within four minutes of one another. The Mew Gull had already averaged something like 180 m.p.h., covering the Portsmouth-Belgrade-Cairo section (2,249 miles) in a little over twelve hours.

The Double Eagle had suffered persistently from air-locks in the fuel system, and Rose had already lost a good deal of time in making special landings at places which he certainly had not included in his schedule. His bad luck held to the bitter end when one of the undercarriage legs folded up while taxiing at Cairo. At the time it seemed that something could be done about it, though hardly in the short period necessary to obtain a place; who was to know that there would be but one finisher? Then it seemed that the race was only to the swift and the strongly constituted.

Already the first five machines were on their way to Khartoum with hardly an hour between the first three, and the weather was favourable as flying weather goes. But Victor Smith had landed at Skoplje, between Belgrade and Salonika, with the previously mentioned trouble. At Khartoum Clouston was due to suffer a seized engine. When Halse arrived at Kisumu only four machines were left in the real race, but Halse's progress, though meteoric, was so regular that everyone felt confident that he would be at Johannesburg in less than thirty-six hours after the start.

He reached Khartoum a little less than an hour before Clouston, whose performance with a slightly slower machine was even more remarkable. Here Llewellyn and Hughesdon's Vega Gull arrived just two minutes before Scott's. Though unnoticed in the excitement caused by Halse's progress, this was surely an amazing duel. Waller, meanwhile, had put the Envoy down for fuel some three hundred miles short of Khartoum, at Kerma, between Wadi Halfa and Kareima. The machine eventually reached Khartoum at 9.30 p.m.

At 8 a.m. on the second day Halse was leaving Kisumu, Kenya, while the two Vega Gulls had only recently left Khartoum and the Envoy was still being anxiously awaited. By

noon he had reached Mbeya, Tanganyika, but was beginning to feel the strain.

Then came the disappointing news. Within

A brilliant effort doomed to failure : Capt. S. S. Halse, who seemed well on the way to a runaway win in a matter of thirty-six hours, but eventually crashed twenty miles from Salisbury. (Flight photograph.)



700 miles of Germiston Halse had crashed his Mew Gull. When nearing Salisbury he had been unable to locate the aerodrome because of the masses of smoke from veldt fires and had landed in what appeared to be a suitable field at Bomboshawa while a little daylight still remained. Farth jammed in the Mew's spats after touching down and the machine went over on its back. Halse escaped at the cost of a dislocated shoulder and superficial injuries. He was only twenty miles from Salisbury, but the poor visibility and the terrific bumps were probably proving too much for an already tired man.

Scott and Guthrie were now in the lead. From Khartoum they had flown direct to Kisumu, a matter of 1,100 miles, while Llewellyn and Hughesdon had flown to Juba, on the more "official" and safer route. When Scott arrived at Abercorn at 7.35 p.m. (to rest for seven hours) on the second day, after leaving Kisumu at 1.31 p.m., Llewellyn had not been reported since he passed over Entebbe at 2.15 p.m., after refuelling at Juba. The Envoy had reached Entebbe and had left again at 5.41 a.m. at the end of its second day's flying.

### Nearing the Finish

The leading Vega Gull left Abercorn at 3.45 a.m., and it was Scott's intention to finish the race in one hop. At 8.30 a.m. it was sighted over Bulawayo with another 450 miles to go, but there was still no report of the second Vega. Then came the inadequate news that it had crashed on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, with the reassuring addition that neither Llewellyn nor Hughesdon was hurt. They had been endeavouring to find Abercorn in similar conditions to those which caused Halse's forced landing, had persisted in their search until their fuel was almost exhausted, and had eventually put down, partially writing-off the Vega.

Scott and Guthrie landed at Germiston at 11.34 a.m., and were met by Mr. Pirow, the South African Minister of Defence, by Mr. Schlesinger, and by Brig.-Gen. Sir Pierre van Ryneveld, who, with Gp. Capt. Sir Quintin Brand, was the pioneer on the route.

The banquet which was to have been given in their honour was cancelled when the sad news of the accident to the Envoy came through. When details were obtainable it was learned that after the machine had landed at Abercorn, Northern Rhodesia, in poor visibility, the wind changed round so that the only possible take-off was both uphill and towards some trees. If the Envoy had been flying in anything but a race Findlay and Waller would have waited for the wind to veer again—particularly as Abercorn is at an altitude of 6,000 ft. They were naturally unwilling to delay to restart and probably considered that the run would be ample despite the advice of the few people on the aerodrome. The Envoy struck the trees after the take-off, and both Capt. Max Findlay and Mr. A. H. Morgan, the radio operator, were so severely injured that they died almost at once. Mr. Ken Waller and the passenger, Mr. Derek Peachey, escaped with comparatively minor injuries.

Immediately he had learnt of the tragedy, Mr. Schlesinger wired to London to suggest that, if no other competitor arrived within the time limit, the balance of the prize-money should be given to the dependents of those who had lost their lives.